the Alliance Weekly

SEPTEMBER 26, 1956

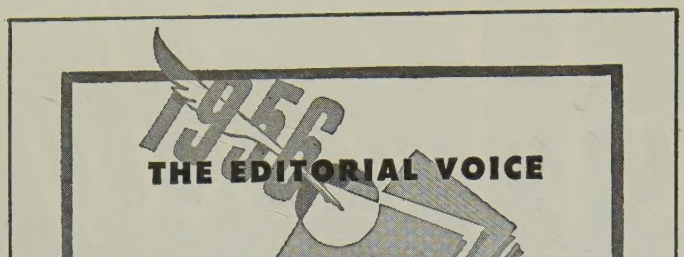
PACIFIC SCHOOL

ONKMEYER

ASSIGNING LESSONS IN INDIAN VILLAGE SCHOOL

In this issue

SPIRITUAL FRUSTRATION . . . . . By W. B. Bedford
THE CALL OF MISSIONS . . . . . By R. R. Kauffman



OPTIMIST OR PESSIMIST?

Immediately following the first World War a wave of pessimism swept over the literate world.

What the cause was I shall not go into here but, whatever it was, the intellectual mood of the '20s and '30s was thoroughly despondent. Materialism, pessimism, cynicism and skepticism were the four horsemen of those gloomy decades and they rode forth conquering and to conquer.

The scientists were materialistic, the philosophers skeptical, the novelists and biographers cynical and almost everyone pessimistic. Even the interpreters of prophecy were apprehensive, for they saw in the capture of Jerusalem by the British and the rise of the Roman Empire under Mussolini evidence of the nearness of the tribulation days, the coming of Antichrist and the collapse of civilization. About the only religionists on the Protestant side who managed to retain a little optimism were the liberals ("modernists" they were called in those days), and they were cheerful for a wrong reason. Out of the poetic passages of a Bible in which they no longer believed they wove delicate daisy chains, which have long since withered, and crocheted pretty religious doilies of which they are not now exactly proud and which they would willingly forget but cannot because their handiwork is still to be found among us —on the seventeen-cent bargain table of the second-hand bookstores.

The close of World War II saw a radical change in the religious mood, especially on the part of the masses. It was a complete reversal. Religion came into its own. Faith became once more intellectually respectable and people stopped being ashamed to admit that they believed in God. Evangelicalism and the world wept briefly on each other's shoulders, kissed, shook hands and became friends. The church discovered that she could use a good many of the world's ideas and the world found that religion was a useful technique for achieving desired ends. The ox and the ass, as well as the lion and the lamb, romped together as they had not done since Luther nailed his theses on the door of the church at Wittenberg and launched the Reformation.

Over the last few years the world has gone on to woo the church (about like water woos a duck!) and has won her heart and hand in what seems to be a case of true love. The honeymoon is still on and the church is now the pampered bride of the world. And what a dowry she has brought to her sensuous and drooling lover! An impenitent and unregenerate populace buys religious books by the millions, to the delight of the profit-hungry publishers. Movie stars now write our hymns; the holy name of Christ sounds out from the gaudy jukebox at the corner pool hall, and in all-night stomp sessions hysterical young people rock and roll to the glory of the Lord.

Today dark-browed Pessimism has gone out of vogue and her happy and irresponsible sister Optimism has come on to take her place. Christianity is now conceived as fun and the only cross is the one on which Jesus died several hundred years ago. Christ's yoke is not only easy, it is downright thrilling; His burden is not only light, it is jaunty. The church goes along with everything and stands against nothing—until she is convinced that it is the safe and popular thing to do; then she passes her courageous resolutions and issues her world shaking manifestoes—all in accord with the world's newest social venture, whatever it may be.

The notion that Christians should always be optimistic and congenial is heresy pure and simple. An ill-founded optimism may under certain conditions be extremely harmful. A Christian is not obliged to be either pessimistic or optimistic or glad or sad or positive or negative after a preconceived rule of philosophy. He should (and will if he is Spirit-taught) reflect the will of God in any given situation. His one concern is with God's will. His one question in any set of circumstances is "What does God think of this?" To him nothing else matters. What the current popular attitude may be is of no importance to him. He will approve or disapprove altogether as the written Word and the indwelling Spirit indicate. Religious vogues, passing moods or popular notions will affect him not at all. His heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.

This rather rigid attitude will, in a world like ours, quite naturally work against the one who holds it and earn him a reputation as a pessimist. People like the man who agrees with them, even if a day later they change their minds and require him to change his too. This inconsistency they laugh off as an amiable weakness, and why be so pious about it anyway?

Well, the sons and daughters of eternity care very little about this maypole dance of popular favor. Like the water bird on the shore of the lake at the approach of winter, they feel within them a strong instinct to migrate. They expect before long to take off on a journey and they're not coming back soon. So whether they leave behind them a reputation for pessimism or optimism is of little consequence to them. They are, however, eager to be remembered as children of God and followers of the Lamb. That's all that matters to them.

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Prayer in itself properly is nought else but a devout intent directed unto God for the getting of good and the removing of evil.—The Cloud of Unknowing.

Symptoms of SPIRITUAL FRUSTRATION

By REV. W. B. BEDFORD

MOST everyone today is, or thinks he is, frustrated. A person wants many things; he attains very few, and so he becomes "frustrated." (However, all lack of attainment is not due to frustration.)

This word that has recently been popularized by the social scientist was introduced a long time ago by the apostle Paul in his writing to the Galatians. Unfortunately for the casual reader, the word is used in a verse found after one of the great New Testament verses (Gal. 2:20) and has therefore gone unnoticed in the towering shadow of its predecessor. Paul says, however, "I do not *frustrate* the grace of God."

The grace of God related to man is probably the greatest single concept in the Bible. To define grace by saying it is "unmerited favor" is like trying to define "mother" by merely describing her physical qualities. In application, God's grace means, among other things, that all that God is, I may become; all that He has, I may receive; and all that He has planned for me is attainable in my life. Paul faced a serious spiritual crisis in life when he said, "I do not frustrate God's grace. . . . I do not want to nullify the working of God's grace in my life. . . . I do not want to cancel it out, or delete it. Please, God, never let me immunize myself against Thy grace!"

Every illness has certain symptoms as well as a cause. The symptoms of illness are usually the outward measurable signs: fever, pain, and so on. The cause of the illness may be a virus termed "X" or any one of its many counterparts. Symptoms point to causes. The virus of sin cancels the working of God's grace in the life. This is always accompanied by some outward indication of inward spiritual dearth.

The first symptom of nullifying the working of God's grace in the life is *excuse-making*. The social scientist calls this rationalization. A person can always find an excuse if he is weak enough to use one. Moses at one time was apparently planning to take on the Egyptian empire singlehanded; at least, he killed a man and buried him in the sand. But later when God asked him to lead His people Moses began to hedge; still later when he was asked to represent God by speaking before Pharaoh he said, "I can't." God's grace said that he could; Moses' excuse-making meant that he could not. A short course in excuse-making is given in Luke 14:18-20. Many of us have passed this course and gone on to do graduate work in the field. "Will you teach a class?" "I can't." "Will you visit?" "I can't." Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." What do you say?

The second symptom of frustrating the grace of God is *ambivalence*, a high-sounding word for a very earthly experience: up and down, victorious and defeated, happy and morbid, enthusiastic and depressed. The Christ-life is not an emotional roller coaster but a high spiritual plane. This does not mean that one must respond to every experience of life with equal zest, but by God's grace we can learn with Paul in whatsoever state we are to be content. Consistency is a lost virtue. A woman recently said to me, "My husband is so good when he is sober." A person may be liberal when he gives, but how often does he give? He may pray well in a church prayer meeting, but how often does he come to church? Grace can help us sing, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ."

One of the meanest things that can be said about anyone is "Oh, he's about average." The average reading habits of adults are deplorable. The average family is in debt up to its television antenna. The average Christian goes to church Sunday morning, gives a pittance to his favorite religious interest and spends the rest of his time living as he pleases. Who wants to be average? The words "grace" and "average" are incompatible.

The grace of God, furthermore, means that we can know God's will for life and can experience the fullness of living in that will: "prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Grace provides the proof. When the man went into the store to buy a compass, the clerk said philosophically, "We have compasses for drawing circles, but not for going places." May God give us a sanctified realization of His will for our lives and a baptism of grace to "go places" for Christ.

Another symptom of frustration is *fantasy*. This symptom ranges from daydreaming to hyperimagina-

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tion. The only service that many render for Christ is in the mind or in the future. Someone has said that "the lazier a man is, the more he intends to do tomorrow." The church needs men of vision, men that will do under God what they can today, not visionaries; men that will be "faithful over a few things." The grace of God is not only manna for the mind but muscle for the will. The grace of God is not dreaming but doing. "Unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us."

One of the most prevalent of all symptoms in frustration is *identification,* trying to be like someone else. The slushy sentiment of the soap opera and the risqué pulp magazine are examples of the strong appeals made to those who wish that their drab lives were more glamorous and scintillating. The world has gone mad trying to be like someone else. Unfortunately this nonsense gets into the field of religion. Showmanship and imitation have made a lot of otherwise quite sensible people play the part of the fool. Its tentacles reach into many phases of religious life. The unsaved try to identify themselves through the experiences of Christian people; children may have only a secondhand (and second-rate) religious experience by identification with godly parents. Some think it is enough to attend a good church or know some faithful missionaries or read good biographies of the great saints of a previous era. This is not adequate. The grace of God introduces one personally to the Lord Jesus Christ. Forgiveness of sins becomes a personal experience. The joy of victorious living and the power of the Holy Spirit in the life are personal truths. Identification rightly relates us to Christ. The individual is brought into personal fellowship with Christ. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Crucifixion of self cures frustration and makes the grace of God real in the life. His grace puts some of heaven into the soul now.

A phase of hell mostly overlooked is the remorse to be suffered for the useful things men did not do but might have done while on earth. "Hell begins on the day when God grants us a clear vision of all that we might have achieved; of all the gifts which we have wasted; of all that we might have done, which we did not do. The poet shall forever scream the poems which he never wrote. The painter will be forever obsessed by visions of the pictures which he did not paint. The musician will strive in vain to remember the sounds which he failed to set down on paper."

The thought of this should drive us to our knees lest we live a life of emptiness instead of His fullness.

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Human Reason Against God

The natural tendency of the human reason is not to enter into the things of God, but rather to despise and reject them; and, strange as it may seem, this continually happens among religious people who are as often real opponents to the true interior life as the Pharisees, with all their high profession of sanctity, were to Jesus Christ and His gospel.—GROU.

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All Men the Subjects of Christ

By EDWARD PAYSON

The subjects of Christ's mediatorial kingdom are divided into two grand classes, those who are obedient and those who are rebellious.

The former class is composed of good men and angels, the latter of wicked men and devils. The former serve Christ willingly and cheerfully. He rules them with the golden scepter of love; His law is written in their hearts; they esteem His yoke easy and His burden light and habitually execute His will. All the bright armies of heaven, angels and archangels who excel in strength are His servants and go forth at His command as messengers of love to minister to the heirs of salvation or as messengers of wrath to execute vengeance on His enemies.

Nor are His obedient subjects to be found only in heaven. In this world also the standard of the cross, the banner of His love, is erected, and thousands and millions who were once His enemies have been brought willing captives to His feet, have joyfully acknowledged Him as their Master and Lord and sworn allegiance to Him as the Author of their salvation.

Nor is His authority less absolute over the second class of His subjects who still persist in their rebellion. In vain do they say, We will not have this Man to reign over us. He rules them with a rod of iron, causes even their wrath to praise Him and makes them the involuntary instruments of carrying on His great designs. He holds all the infernal spirits in a chain, governs the conquerors, the monarchs and great ones of the earth, and in all things wherein they deal proudly He is still above them and they are subject to Him.

In one or the other of these ways all must serve Christ. Is it not better to serve Him willingly and be rewarded, than to serve Him reluctantly and be destroyed?

The call of missions is threefold

"Go . . . Let Go . . . Help Go"

By REV. RUSSELL R. KAUFFMAN

IN SOME countries a man of means who receives a call to military service may pay a substitute to go in his place. But no substitute can fill the place God has for you. His call to service cannot be evaded without eternal loss to you and to the ones who would have been turned to Christ through your ministry. In order that Christ's message of redemption shall reach men in all parts of the world some of those who have been redeemed must be the ones to carry the news. If you have been selected for this special task, embrace the call with gladness. Even if the Holy Spirit is directing you to people far away from your native land, do not hesitate to accept His will. He will make you an "ambassador for Christ."

Dr. William Owen Carver said, "Missions means the extensive realization of God's redemptive purpose in Christ by means of human messengers." At the center of missions is Jesus Christ. He Himself is the message and it is His love which constrains His people to make it known. The Holy Spirit is the administrator. Through His presence and illumination the message becomes effective, convicting of sin and kindling love for Christ. But the Christian is the human messenger who goes to all men living on the face of the earth. His part is indispensable. "How shall they hear without a preacher?" Some Christians must go in person.

Obviously there are Christians who cannot go in person. Perhaps you have passed the age generally agreed to be the limit for messengers to peoples of different languages living in distant places. You have family responsibilities or other obligations that cannot be laid aside. But you do have children you can let go. To "let go" means more than to acquiesce to your child's becoming a missionary "if that is what he wants to do." The vision for missions as an integral part of the Christian's life must so permeate the thinking of parents that it becomes the pivot around which the home operates. The spirit of missions in the home will become so contagious that to "let go" will be more than your approval or consent. It will be the educational program of your home. Praying, living and budgeting for missions in your home are all a part of the "let go."

To the greater number of Christians the questions of going personally or letting a son or daughter go are not applicable. But there is an important part of missions in which every Christian can share. Everyone can "help go." From the girl who works at the counter in the ten-cent store to the business magnate, from the teacher in the Bible school to the worker among the Danis in the Baliem Valley, all must help someone go somewhere else with the gospel. This is a part of the inevitable law of spiritual reproduction. When this law is obeyed it will bring the blessing of God upon His work. The one who makes the "help go" the primary purpose for his existence is as much a missionary as the one who travels sea and earth to reach a primitive tribe.

In many instances many who "help go" only help with that which costs them nothing. Instead of the "help go" being as great a sacrifice as the missionary is making, the "help go" is only a portion of the obligation that would be given to the church whether missions were in the Bible or not. This is not being a missionary in the true sense of the word. If some can give up houses and land, wealth and children, and go to the unlovely and undesirable places of earth, then is it too much to expect those of us who live at home to deny ourselves that we might "help go"? I am sure Jesus Christ expects no less interest, no less passion and sacrifice from us at home than He does of the servant who travels the malaria-ridden swamps and jungles of earth looking for men and women who shall become temples for the Holy Spirit.

What would happen if every pastor, missionary and layman who reads this should suddenly take the work of "help go" seriously? Is it too much to think of having at least one church in each city across America burning with this unquenchable flame for world evangelization? Should there not be more A. B. Simpsons, Harold Ockengas, Oswald Smiths, L. H. Ziemers in America? Did God cry "Go . . . let go . . . help go" into their ears only? Is just a part of the church responsible for bringing back the King? Why should not all be speaking the word that will bring back the King?

I believe that in America there should be 50,000 Christian homes each supporting a missionary. This is not an impractical dream of a missions enthusiast. It is being put into practice with results that gladden the hearts of those who so give. Already many families whose incomes would be found in the average bracket are supporting a missionary on the field this year. Many more

laymen and pastors should also feel the obligation to do this very thing.

We live in an era of two-car families. Why not have one car and one missionary? We are building bigger and better homes. Why not a modest home and a personal representative for Christ somewhere in the world? We talk in big sums in everything but missions. In a recent year our United States budget exceeded 300 billion dollars. That year we spent one-seventh of one-thousandth of one per cent of that figure for world evangelization.

Everyone must "help go." Why not "help go" this year in a very practical, personal and scriptural way? Support your own missionary this year.

On the back page of this ALLIANCE WEEKLY are listed countries in which Alliance missionaries are working. Because the cost of living varies in each country, missionary allowances and other expenses also vary. A good way to cultivate your missionary vision is to assume responsibility for supporting someone laboring in a particular field. ◆ ◆ ◆

It takes some doing as well as reading to educate a man

The Making of an Educated Man

By REV. JOHN BECHTEL

SUCCESSFUL leaders of all ages have emphasized the importance of reading books as an essential part of education. A great Chinese philosopher who was emperor during the Sung dynasty was greatly devoted to reading. Because he recognized the paramount importance of reading in education, he ordered a work of literature to be edited in one thousand volumes, which he determined to read through in one year. When his royal advisers remonstrated with him, the emperor-philosopher replied: "Open a book and you are profited."

Another Chinese scholar was so devoted to his books that he neglected sleep and food on their account. His unusual interest in literature gave rise to the expression "He who thirsts after learning is mad."

Many are the tales that could be recounted concerning members of the Chinese literati like the scholar Yu Shih-man, who was so well-versed in ancient and modern philosophy that he was called "a walking notebook." Reading was considered to be such an important component of a complete education that the definition of "extensive learning," according to the ancient literary authorities, was one "who fed on the ancient and took a mouthful of the modern." One Chinese scholar had climbed so high and had gained such an honorable reputation in literary attainment that he was described as being like the Tai Mountain. Still another Chinese bookworm read so extensively and became so learned that "his cough and spittle became jewels (pearls and jade) when wafted on the breeze." One learned man became so familiar with the literature of his age that the poetry he composed was so beautiful that when his verses fell on the earth they were said to have the "ring of gold."

Similarly, the great apostle, Paul, of the Christian era, in writing to his youthful follower, Timothy, exhorted him: "Bestow your attention on reading" (1 Tim. 4:13). The first missionary to the Gentiles had himself sat "at the feet of Gamaliel" and hence was fully aware of the importance of reading in the formation of an education.

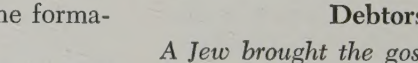
Reading books *is* an essential part of education, most of us will agree. But, we hasten to add, reading books is only a part of education.

Jesus Christ, in bringing his so-called "Sermon on the Mount" to a close said: "It is not those that merely hear the Law read who are righteous in the sight of God, but it is those that obey the Law who will be pronounced righteous" (free translation). In other words, the Master was emphasizing the well-recognized truth that theory without practice is not sufficient. It is one thing to hear, it is one thing to read, it is one thing to know the theory; but it is a far different thing to put the knowledge so gained into practice.

A person may be well instructed in the principle of swimming: the proper position of the arms and the legs, the manner in which the feet and hands should be rotated in the water, how the head should be held, at what angle the body should rest in the water, how breathing should be controlled, how the stroke of the arms should be synchronized with the tread of the feet (and unquestionably, knowledge of this kind is very valuable); but coupled with all this there must be the practical experience of swimming. The tiniest duckling, by instinct, without any knowledge of theory whatsoever, plunges from its mother's back confident that it will be able to swim—and it swims.

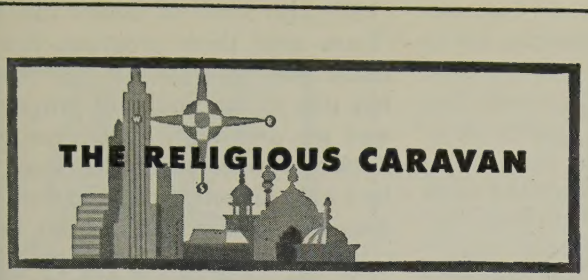
Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, we cannot acquire an education by instinct or environment or heredity. We must exert ourselves, we must search. We must, in the words of the ancient Chinese scholar, "suck the bloom and chew the flower." Then, and only then, through reading, will we acquire knowledge and, having knowledge, we are considered to be "educated."

Reading is a very important one, but only one, of the many ingredients that go to make an educated man. The other components of the formula must be included or we cannot be described as "educated."



Debtors

A Jew brought the gospel to Rome; a Roman took it to France; a Frenchman took it to Scandinavia; a Scandinavian took it to Scotland; a Scotchman took it to Ireland. No people ever received the gospel but at the hands of an alien. "Freely ye have received, freely give."



DAVID R. ENLOW, Editor

AT HOME

Church membership passes the 100,000,000 mark: For the first time in the nation's history church members in the United States number more than 100,000,000. Continuing an upsurge that goes back to World War II, church membership gains in the past year again outstripped population gains. There are 2.8 per cent more church members as against 1.8 per cent more people. Other notable gains shown in new annual statistics on America's religious life include Sunday school enrollment, which is up 3.4 per cent for a new total of nearly 39,000,000; per capita contributions were $48.81 annually, up 7 per cent. The 1957 Yearbook of American Churches shows there are now 100,162,529 church members in the United States. Of these 58,448,000 are Protestant, 33,396,000 Roman Catholic and 5,500,000 Jewish. In addition, there are 2,386,000 members of Eastern Orthodox Churches in this country, with some 53,000 Buddhists. An "informal" estimate of Moslems places the total between ten and twenty thousand.

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Evangelicals told Nehru friendly to missionaries: The West too often assumes that Prime Minister Nehru of India is leaning toward Communism, Canon Samuel Burgoyne, of Allahabad Cathedral, told the triennial international conference of the World Evangelical Fellowship meeting in Barrington, R. I. The Anglican clergyman said Mr. Nehru leans heavily toward neither the West nor the Reds and under his continued prime ministry Christian missionary work in India will go forward. Mr. Nehru, he said, "has frequently taken our side" in India's internal dispute over the activities of foreign missionaries.

●

To offer course for Sunday school teachers: A course specially designed for Sunday school officers and teachers will be offered for the first time this fall at the University of Miami. Called "Orientation in Religious Education," it will deal with the basic problems of religious education in a nonsectarian way. To be eligible for the course, students must be doing actual work in their churches.

●

General withdraws compulsory church order: An order making church attendance mandatory for soldiers at Fort Carson, near Colorado Springs, Colo., was withdrawn by Major Gen. Thomas M. Watlington, commanding general of the 30,000-man post. He said he would amend the order to encourage church attendance rather than make it mandatory. "We are just as responsible for the spiritual welfare of the young men sent to us by the American people as we are for seeing that they are well trained," the general said.

ABROAD

India Bible Society reports gains: Some portion of the Scriptures now exists in the tongues used by 98 per cent of India's population—from Abor Miri to Zangskari, according to the annual report of the Bible Society of India, Pakistan and Ceylon. However, it pointed out that the remaining 2 per cent constitute seven million people, "approximately the population of Australia or half that of Canada."

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Wide antireligious drive launched in Estonia: Tallinn Radio, Estonia, reported that an extensive campaign against "religious superstition" had been launched in the Communist-ruled country under the supervision of "Professor of Sciences Novick." Declaring that the drive would be "more widespread than any similar campaign hitherto conducted," the station said its aim was "to lay bare the miracle myths and to demonstrate that science shows mankind the path of active struggle for a better future."

●

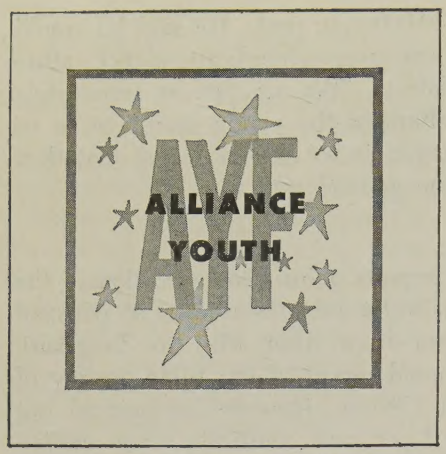
Reds organize exhibition to expose missionaries: Chinese Communist authorities in Manchuria have organized an exhibition at Mukden intended to expose the alleged "antirevolutionary" activities carried on by "imperialists" in China "under the cover of the Christian religion." Details of the exhibit were learned from a Mukden newspaper received in Hong Kong. The paper said the display of "criminal evidence" was organized by the religious affairs office of the Mukden municipal people's council and is attracting thousands of visitors.

PEOPLE

Baptist leader encouraged over religious freedom: Dr. Theodore Adams, of Richmond, Va., president of the Baptist World Alliance, said in Hong Kong he had found encouraging signs of freedom of religion throughout Europe and the Middle East. "We found Baptist work increasing everywhere," he said. "This was true even in Spain where our churches are closed. In the Middle East our work is being carried out normally."

●

Missionary elected bishop for Southeast Asia: Dr. Hobart Bauman Amstutz, who has served for thirty years as a missionary in Malaya, was consecrated Methodist Bishop for Southeast Asia at Singapore. He succeeds Bishop Raymond L. Archer, of Singapore, who is retiring. A native of Henrietta, Ohio, Dr. Amstutz is district superintendent for Southern Malaya. He also serves as Methodist chaplain to the British Army, the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force in Malaya.



ROBERT E. CUTBIRTH, Editor

AYF Program Contest Winners

By REV. WELDON B. BLACKFORD

National Youth Secretary

This is the moment for which many of our AYFers have been waiting, the announcement of the 1956 Program Contest winners!

Here it is:

The first prize of some valuable books for the AYF library will be awarded to the following Alliance Youth Fellowships:

Missions Program—Dubois, Pa. "A Missionary Committee Meeting."
Seasonal Program—Wenatchie, Wash. "Back to School Program."
Variety Program—Ambridge, Pa. "The AYF Was There."
Study Program—Troy, N. Y. "Six Worship Programs—Christ in the Twenty-Third Psalm."

The second prize of a beautiful Printo-matic machine for post card printing goes to the following:

Missions Program—Gospel Tabernacle, Toledo, Ohio. "League of Nations Program."
Seasonal Program—Ottawa, Canada. "Heroes of the Faith."
Variety Program—Gospel Tabernacle, Erie, Pa. "Genuine or Fraudulous."
Study Program—Orlando, Fla. "Alliance Truth for Alliance Youth."

Recognition award certificates will be given to the Fellowships whose programs were among the first ten in each of the four divisions. Some groups rated honorable mention in more than one category. They are:

AYF of Worcester, Mass.
AYF of Syracuse, N. Y.
AYF of Rome, N. Y.
AYF of Brookline, Mass.
AYF of Redlands, Calif.
AYF of Lambert, Mont.
AYF of Clymer, Pa.
AYF of Portsmouth, Va.
AYF of Ithaca, N. Y.
AYF of St. Paul, Minn.
AYF of Richmond, Calif.
AYF of Logansport, Ind.
AYF of Stratford, Conn.
AYF of Montgomery, Ala.
AYF of New Castle, Pa.
AYF of Ronan, Mont.

We wish to express our deepest appreciation to all the youth leaders and churches who wholeheartedly supported the 1956 AYF Program Contest. We also wish to thank the judges of the contest program, Dr. C. Donald McKaig, Mr. Paul Milburn and Rev. Don Moreland, for their able assistance in deciding the final contest winners. Special thanks go to Christian Publications, Inc., of Harrisburg, Pa., for supplying the awards as a contribution to the Program Contest.

This is the first time that the youth of our Society have engaged in such an international program and it is interesting to note the results. Many of our Alliance Youth Fellowships followed the program with interest and we were well pleased with the response.

One hundred and sixty-nine programs were received, many accompanied with letters expressing appreciation. A letter from McAllen, Texas, reads, "We think this is a wonderful way to get programs and new ideas. May the Lord enrich you for this endeavor." A letter from Toronto, Ontario, says, "We would like to share a program with you. . . . May God continue to bless in your endeavor to keep the Alliance youth on the march for God." From Miami, Florida, another letter came, "If we can help in any way by sending in more program ideas, please feel free to call on us."

One of our pastors in New England came to me this summer and said, "Thank God for the Program Contest. You will never know what it has done for the young people in our church."

We also received letters like this: "I am sorry these programs did not reach you in time for the contest but due to our building program it was an oversight. The committee decided to send them in as they may be a help in compiling a book of programs." Another letter from Pennsylvania enclosed some programs and said, "I realize that they are late but please accept them as just a contribution. I sincerely hope you will be able to use them."

We know that many of you would like to have made a contribution to the AYF National Program Contest but something interfered. Here is a big announcement which will give you another chance. A 1957 AYF Program Contest will begin February 1 and continue through May 31. We are expecting many more of our AYFs to join in this second contest. Begin now to plan and prepare for better programs in 1957. In the near future your leaders will receive information regarding plans for 1957.

A book containing the top fifty-two programs from the 1956 AYF Program Contest will be published soon. Watch for this announcement!

Walking Straight

Five boys went out to play in the woods one winter day and one of them said, "Let's see who can make the straightest tracks in the snow."

They made a great game of it—each boy trying to make the straightest set of tracks by carefully putting one foot ahead of the other.

When they checked up, they found one boy's tracks curbed, another's zigzagged. The other two were crooked also. Only one of the boys had been able to make a straight path.

"How did you do it?" the four demanded.

The boy pointed. "See that tree over there? I got in line with it and walked straight for it."

We on this great pathway of life need to do just that—we need to get lined up with Jesus and walk the narrow path, the straight path, the blessed path. We may be sure then of walking straight.—MARGARET FREEMAN, in *Youth's Christian Companion.*

ight in an Indian Village

y HILDA J. DAVIES

wo of us missionaries recently vis-ed in the homes of women who ere formerly Bible school students t Khamgaon. Some of them live in ery remote places and we wished o see how they were getting along nd to encourage them in the way.

The approach to one of the villages o which we went was so rough we ere thoroughly bounced and shak-n while riding over it. By no stretch f the imagination could those cart racks be called a road. Before ar-iving at the house of one former tudent we had to wade through a tream. The entrance to her dwell-ng was so low we stooped as we ntered, but soon the three of us ere seated on the floor in the tiny oom she used for a kitchen.

A crowd of people which gathered round the house had their curiosity atisfied in a little while and they ispersed. Before we could do much alking a fretful little boy had to be uieted. His stomach was distended y malnutrition and he suffered from ickets. His mother had tried to acify him with a few kernels of arched grain, the only food in the ouse. He plainly enjoyed the large lass of milk we mixed, using the ry powder we had with us.

The joy we experienced at seeing he young woman was matched by er incredulous delight at our seek-ng her out and our hearts were arm as we saw how eagerly she poke of her faith in Christ. Her an-wers to our questions were clear vidence that she had not let the eathen atmosphere surrounding her ave any influence over her ideals. What she had come to know of the aving power of Christ was un-dimmed. Realizing the preciousness of her relationship to Christ, she had been allowing her light to shine and had been speaking to other women in the village of Him.

She said that she not only had been telling her neighbors of Christ but that they had observed the loving consideration she and her husband have for each other. As Christians, she said, they always were thankful whether their supply of food was sufficient or not. At the well when other women fought to be first to get their water, she would patiently wait, preferring to be last rather than mar her testimony.

Her face, cruelly marked by smallpox, warmed with love as she told us what the companionship of Jesus meant to her. The walls of her home are made of mud and dried twigs; her earthly goods are few, but her steadfast devotion to Christ was as much an encouragement to us as our visit was to her.

The church in any country is only as strong as the Christian women. When a man turns to the Lord, too often he comes alone, but when a women is saved she brings her family as well. From homes such as the one in which we visited that day will come children who will assume places of leadership in the church of Jesus Christ as they grow to manhood and womanhood. Inspired by a mother's faith, they too will be brought to know for themselves the power of Christ to deliver from sin and to establish them in His righteousness.

The loveliness of the Lord Jesus Christ shining through the hearts and lives of His own amid the everyday grind and the poverty of villages throughout India prepares the way for the church to grow and to bring glory to His name. We are all members with them of Christ's Body and we should stand with each other in prayer that the priceless treasure of His salvation shall be made fully known to all men.

Japanese Attracted by Gospel Tent

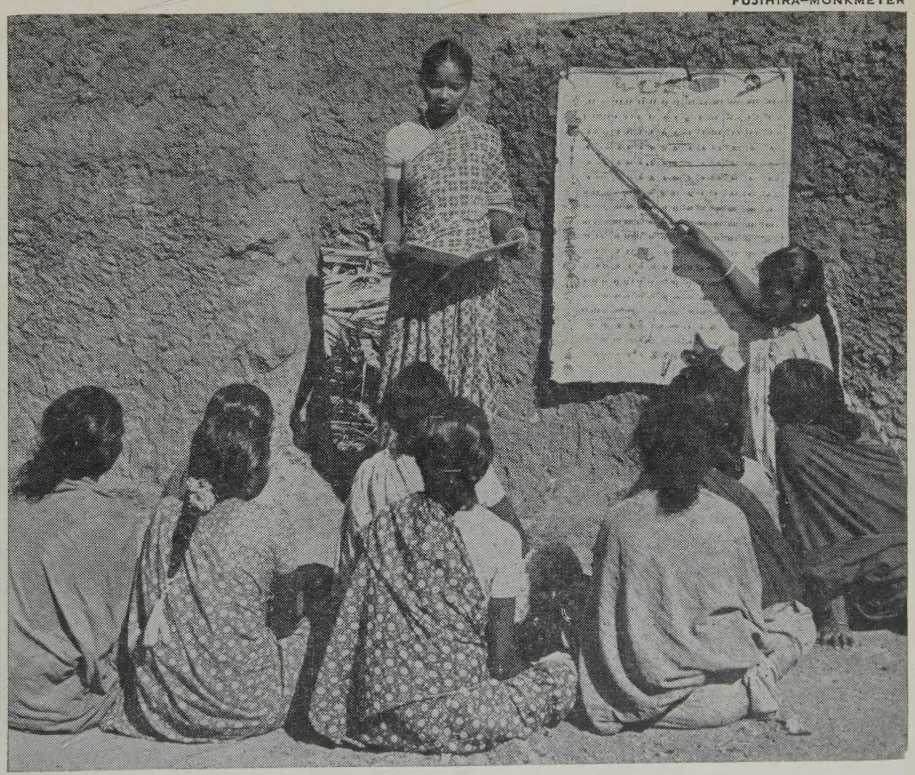
By REV. PAUL McGARVEY

Early in the summer we began a series of evangelistic meetings by pitching the new tent in the recreation park at the city of Matsue. Folding benches which were purchased at the same time as the tent provide seating for three hundred people. A small tent is used by the team of Bible school students as living quarters.

By means of this equipment the workers are able to interest large

Teaching village illiterates is one of the important keys to the spread of the gospel in India. This is a vital ministry for the young Bible school students, especially among the women.

FUJIHIRA–MONKMEYER



A. P. MCGARVEY

Part of the gospel team starting out for street meetings in Japan

numbers of people who would otherwise not come in contact with the gospel message. Our hearts rejoice as we think of the many friends in America whose gifts and prayers have made possible our reaching out in this manner.

Weather conditions were not ideal in Matsue when the meetings opened because the rainy season had scarcely ended. Our fear that this would discourage the crowds from coming proved groundless. So many people were attracted by curiosity to look at the tent and peep into it that we decided to start a day earlier.

Each night a special service for children was attended by as many as could crowd in. There were at least five hundred of them every night. It is thought that during the eight days' campaign approximately five thousand different people listened to some part of the messages.

In addition to meetings in the tent, street meetings also were held in other parts of the town and thousands of tracts were distributed. Contacts made at that time are being renewed by the Japanese pastor and the missionaries in Matsue. Believers and inquirers gather in the missionary residence to worship. A more suitable place of meeting ought to be provided but as yet no means of acquiring one has been found.

Following the Matsue campaign there was an interval of a few weeks to allow us to be present at the closing of the Bible school for vacation and to attend the missionary conference. Then we set up the tent in Imabari, a place in which there had not previously been an Alliance worker. Again the meetings were well attended. About eight to twelve seekers were dealt with at the close of each evening service. To provide regular instruction for them in the Word of God we arranged for one of the workers to remain in Imabari.

In Miihama, an industrial city known for its wickedness, the people at first were not as responsive as in the other two places. Attendance was low and interest lagged. On the fourth night change came. The presence of th Lord was very manifest in the servic and twenty-five persons sought Hi as Saviour. Each night followin that there were at least ten seeker In the last children's meeting ever one of the three hundred who wer present raised his hand in respons to the invitation. Special care ha been taken to make clear to the what that act signified so that the would not do it unless they reall meant that they wanted Christ a their Lord. It would be too opt mistic to assume that all of the have experienced a change of hear That some of them actually took step of faith we have no doubt. Gc is calling out for His glory a peop for His Body.

We expect the tent campaigns t introduce a great many new peop to our radio broadcasts. The Bib correspondence course is arousin interest and the liberal distributio of literature and Gospels is bound t bear fruit. We have the promis "In due season we shall reap, if w faint not."

When the tent is set up in com munities where there are establishe churches the members help by co tributing toward the expenses of th campaign, but most of this work done at Mission expense and mu be supported through the gifts an prayers of friends in the homelan upon whose hearts the Lord lays burden for this work.

Mrs. Dievendorf and other workers welcome visitors to the tent

A. P. MCGARV

illiam Christie, Apostle to Tibet, by ›ward Van Dyck. Christian Publica- ns, Inc., Harrisburg, Pa. 176 pages, .50.

Pioneers are flesh and blood like rselves, and yet they must possess tstanding qualifications—strength of aracter and convictions as to the will God for their life, a sturdiness of ritual and physical strength coupled th devotion to duty as they see it, a ep heart interest in the welfare of e primitive people to whom they go d a willingness to face all the dangers olved in pioneering. All these quali- ations and more were possessed and emplified by a quiet-spoken, unassum- ; and deeply spiritual Scottish lad o came an immigrant to American res and became indeed an apostle Tibet. Devotion to the Lord of the rvest in the face of overwhelming ficulties and dangers was the secret the eminently useful life of William ristie, excellently told in this bi- raphy by a fellow veteran mission- .—V. Raymond Edman.

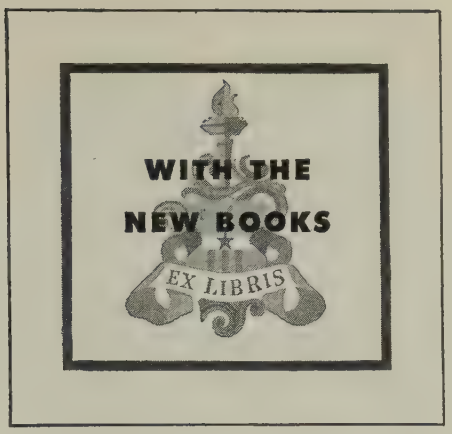
Study of The Book of Acts, by Charles Woodbridge. Baker Book House, and Rapids, Mich. 151 pages, $2.50.

Dr. Woodbridge, professor of Church story at Fuller Theological Semi- y, has invested this outline sum- ry of Acts with much of the wealth his knowledge as a historian as well the fervency of his missionary in- est. "Standing on the Promises" is suggestive subtitle of the book.

Woodbridge has two specific prom- is in mind, which were the "im- gnable rocks upon which the church the first century stood." The first s the promise of the Holy Spirit's ning at Pentecost, the other the mise of the Parousia of the Son of d. The whole narrative of Acts un- ds around these twin truths, show- them to have been concrete realities the life of the Early Church, not t theological abstractions. There is short chapter summarizing each of twenty-eight in Acts; a title is en each one phrased consistently oughout the book in clever and not comfortable alliteration. It is a credit the scholarship of this able man that can express himself with a sim- city and sincerity that will make his k a blessing to all who read it.— K Shepherd.

the Arena of Faith, A Call to the nsecrated Life, by Erich Sauer. n. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., and Rapids, Mich. 188 pages, 00.

In a study based on the twelfth apter of Hebrews, Erich Sauer calls believers to "look unto Jesus" and press on in the race that is the



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Christian life. So that we may more clearly understand the meaning of this chapter of Hebrews, Sauer gives a detailed explanation of Greek and Roman sports events. These ancients took sports very seriously, and Bible writers, especially Paul, found many symbols of spiritual life in the athlete's strenuous preparation, in his concentration and perseverance, in the obstacles of the races, the struggles of the wrestlers and boxers, and in the rewards to be gained. This book not only gives a fuller understanding of such symbols but it is an excellent source of Bible teaching material as the author compares text with text and makes many points in outline form.

Early in the book Sauer tells us that the gospel message is concerned with both vision and action: "not only worship, but discipleship." Unfortunately it seems that only a few Christians are able to stress both these essentials. And yet it is impossible to possess either in any real sense without the other. Christian service without vision is only self-inspired, no matter how many Bible texts are quoted. Again, any who claim special experiences with God are deluded unless these experiences are proved real by their obedience to God's commands.

It will, alas, be possible for many to praise Sauer's book on consecration as soundly scriptural and still continue without either experiencing true worship or learning the meaning of discipleship. No book can transform lives, though the Holy Spirit may use books to get attention, to arouse longing, to open eyes to failure. Perhaps *In the Arena of Faith* will have its greatest value in the instruction of those who have already cried out to Christ, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"—Helen Sigrist.

Called to Be Saints, by Larry Love. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 137 pages, $2.00.

This little book is well worth reading. Written in the Reformed tradition by a Presbyterian pastor, it points out clearly that salvation involves being saved from something to something in relation to sin and sins.

The author makes it clear that grace does not abrogate the moral law but does what God all along desired and intended: identifies the moral law with the heart of the believer. One in love does not feel the burden of keeping appointments and procuring gifts. He joyously and eagerly does these things because they are in harmony with the law of love which possesses him. Thus it is with the believer. The law is swallowed up in love to God and men. It is written on the tablets of the heart. Thus in twelve succinct chapters the author argues for the righteousness of Christ in the life of the one who exemplifies Him—the believer.—Harold C. Mason.

Books in Brief

Master Book of New Illustrations, by Walter B. Knight. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 760 pages, $6.95.

This new volume of 4,000 illustrations has been produced by the man who compiled the book *3,000 Illustrations for Christian Service.* Mr. Knight's earlier volume seems to have been well received, having gone through five editions. This book is well organized and attractively printed; it should be of benefit to those who utilize such sources for illustrative material.

A Man of Tarsus, Life and Work of Paul, by H. L. Phillips. Warner Press (1955), Anderson, Ind. 104 pages, $1.50 (75¢, paper).

The author says concerning his book, "This work makes no other claim than to be a simple, get-acquainted approach to Paul." He has succeeded in attaining this modest objective. The book may be found useful as an inexpensive manual for group study; the outline is clear and is correlated with Acts and the Epistles. Each chapter has suggestive topics for further study.

Lingering at Calvary, by S. Franklin Logsdon. Moody Press, Chicago, Ill. 160 pages, $2.50.

Christians should not rush matter-of-factly through any part of the Bible, but certainly we should pause longest of all to consider Calvary. Though the alliterative titles and subheads of the book may seem somewhat labored to some, *Lingering at Calvary* is a reverent examination of the meaning of the suffering and death of Christ.

News reports may be sent direct to Rev. C. E. Harrod, The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church, East and Lane Streets, Raleigh, N. C.

To the Fields

Miss Henriette Kintzinger sailed from Marseilles, France, on September 13 for French West Africa. Early in October she will be married to Mr. Charles Bossert, who went to the field last year. They will be in charge of the boys' boarding school in Somasso, French Soudan. Miss Kintzinger, who received her Bible training in France, is also a teacher.

Henriette Kintzinger
French West Africa

On Furlough

Misses Frances Eisensmith, M. Lenore Fulton and Ruthena F. Patterson arrived in New York on September 6 from the Congo. Both Miss Eisensmith and Miss Fulton first went to the field in 1925. Miss Fulton has been teaching in the Bible school at Kinkonzi, while Miss Eisensmith has engaged in work among the women. Miss Patterson, who is on her first furlough, assisted in the medical work at Kinkonzi.

Miss Norma Pater, on her first furlough from Thailand, arrived in Los Angeles, Calif., by plane on September 11. During the past year she has been nurse in the home and school for missionaries' children at Dalat, Viet Nam. Her home is in Los Angeles. During furlough she will take some special nursing courses in preparation for her work in Thailand.

With the Lord

Rev. Marcus L. Haskell, pastor in Arlington, Tex., went to be with the Lord on August 22. He was fifty-two years of age. Mr. Haskell was a devoted and able worker in the Southwestern District for thirteen years, serving pastorates in Langley, Kingfisher, Edmond and Tulsa, Okla., prior to Arlington. His colaborers expressed their confidence in him by annually electing him as a member of the District Executive Committee every year since 1948. In 1949 he was married to Miss Elizabeth Dinch, who survives him. Mr. Haskell died soon after arriving in Washington, Pa., where he had driven from Texas. The funeral was held in Washington, with Rev. George P. Morgan officiating.

Foreign Secretary Visits Fields

Rev. Louis L. King, Foreign Secretary, left New York on September 10 for a six-week trip to Thailand, Indo-China, the Philippines and New Guinea to confer with missionaries and national leaders. The main portion of his time (September 15–October 9) will be spent in Cambodia and Viet Nam. Prayer is requested for God's anointing upon his ministry. He expects to return to the United States on October 21.

Wheaton College Honors Missionary

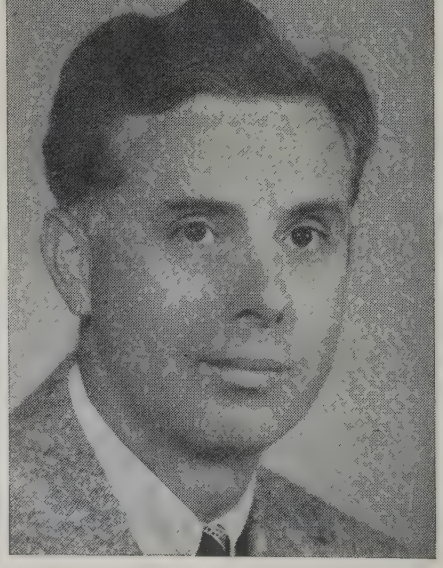
At its convocation on August 17 Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill., conferred the honorary Doctor of Divinity degree on Rev. William C. Newbern, missionary in Hong Kong. The degree was conferred *in absentia*. Mr. Newbern, who is chairman of the Hong Kong C. & M. A. Mission, is also in charge of the Cheung Chau Bible Institute.

Area Secretary Appointed

On September 6, 1956, the Board of Managers elected Rev. Robert M. Chrisman to the office of Area Secretary for India and the Far East to fulfill the unexpired term of Rev. Louis L. King, who was elected Foreign Secretary at the General Council last May.

Mr. and Mrs. Chrisman have just returned on furlough from Thailand where they have served since 1930. Mr. Chrisman was one of the first missionaries to return to the field in 1946 following the war, acting as Board Representative for this area which was previously a part of the Indo-China Mission. At the first conference of the

Rev. Robert M. Chrisman, Area Secretary



Missionary Treasury

★ ★ ★ ★

August, 1956

General Fund ..... $247,556.
Designated Specials ..... 38,083.

Gifts for the month of August are cove by our receipts Nos. 10862 to 12421 a 729 to 825. If you failed to receive receipt for your contributions, please co municate with our auditors, Messrs. La brides & Lambrides, 220 West 42nd Stre New York 36, N. Y.

All contributions should be designat and addressed to the Treasurer, The Chr tian and Missionary Alliance, 260 W 44th Street, New York 36, N. Y.

Bernard S. Ki
Treasurer.

newly organized Mission he was elect chairman and has since served in th capacity.

Mr. Chrisman's first assignment w be to meet the Foreign Secretary New Guinea around October 13, a to serve as administrator of that fie for about two months, helping coördinate the activities of the thr areas of work: the Wissel Lakes, t Baliem Valley and the aviation secti in Hollandia.

Special prayer is requested for ministry in New Guinea and as assumes the responsibility for the wo in other parts of the Far East a India. The Foreign Department h asked Mr. Chrisman to take up office duties at the New York hea quarters the first of January, 1957.

The New Generation

To Mr. and Mrs. Vern Hicks, For Lake, Minn., a son, Todd Peter, August 9.

To Mr. and Mrs. Norman Foss, A ka, Minn., a daughter, Judy Janet, August 15.

To Rev. and Mrs. Frank J. Ma Ellensburg, Wash., a daughter, L borah Jean, on August 11.

Marriages

Miss Alice Shields was married Mr. Warren Ingalls at Nay-tah-wau Minn., on August 2, 1956.

Miss Barbara Jean Bolender w united in marriage to Mr. Philip Sor son at Lima, Ohio, on September 1956.

On August 24 Miss Mary El McCorkle was married to Mr. Fred Hawley of Seattle, Wash.

Correction

In our issue of September 5 we stat that it would require about $1,200 repair the damage to our property Cali, South America, following the plosion on August 7. Later word fr Mr. Searing says that about $500 w be sufficient for the necessary repa

Sunday

DAILY READING—Hebrews 11:8-19.
DAILY TEXT—*"He went out, not knowing whither he went"* (verse 8).

It is faith without sight. When we can see, it is not faith, but reasoning. In crossing the Atlantic we observed this very principle of faith. We saw no path upon the sea nor sign of the shore. And yet day by day we were marking our path upon the chart as exactly as if there had followed a great chalk line upon the sea; and when we came within twenty miles of land, we knew where we were as exactly as if we had seen all three thousand miles ahead. How had we measured and marked our course? Day by day our captain had taken his instruments and, looking up to the sky, had fixed his course by the sun. He was sailing by the heavenly, not the earthly, lights. So faith looks up and sails on by God's great sun, not seeing one shore line or earthly lighthouse or path upon the way. Often its steps seem to lead into utter uncertainty and even darkness and disaster. But He opens the way, and often makes such midnight hours the very gates of day. Let us go forth this day, not knowing, but trusting.—A. B. SIMPSON.

Monday

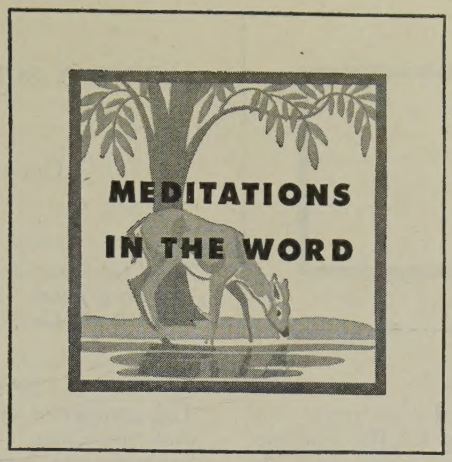
DAILY READING—Romans 8:28-33.
DAILY TEXT—*"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son"* (verse 29).

We are foreordained of God only that we may be conformed to the image of His Son: nailed with Him to the cross, renouncing with Him carnal pleasure, content with Him in suffering. But our blindness is such we wish to be loosened from the cross that holds us to our Master. We wish to abandon the cross without leaving Jesus Christ crucified. The cross and He are inseparable. Let us live and die with Him, who came to show us the only true way to heaven. . . . . Alas! all our own efforts will but lead us farther from the one, the only, way to heaven. We know not what we do. We do not understand the mystery of grace joined to the blessing of tears. Every path that leads us to the throne is delight, though bristling with thorns. Every path that leads to the abyss is frightful, even if covered with roses. One suffers in the narrow way, but one hopes; one suffers, but he sees the heavens opened; one suffers, but is content to suffer; one knows he loves God, and is beloved of Him.—FÉNELON.

Tuesday

DAILY READING—Ephesians 2:1-10.
DAILY TEXT—*"But God . . . is rich in mercy"* (verse 4).

What glowing hope that little phrase, "But God . . .," brings into life! When it appears in Scripture it is like an open door from a dark room into the sunlight, like the turning point in a



Compiled by EDITH M. BEYERLE

critical illness, like a sudden break in the clouds or the lifting of fog, like the first breath of wind on a dead, calm sea, or a blazed trail picked up again in a forest. It marks the transition from spiritual death to eternal life, from utter helplessness to abounding strength in Christ, from being "under the circumstances" to being above them. "My flesh and my heart faileth," said David, "but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever" (Psa. 73:26). What Christian worker does not know the overwhelming feeling of that first complaint? Yet it is the privilege of every servant of the Lord to know the uplift of looking away to Him.—SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES.

Wednesday

DAILY READING—Revelation 1:7-18.
DAILY TEXT—*"Behold, he cometh"* (verse 7).

On that bright and golden morning,
when the Son of man shall come,
And the radiance of His glory we
shall see;
When from every clime and nation He
shall call His people home,
What a gathering of the ransomed
that will be.

When our eyes behold the city, with its
many mansions bright
And its river, calm and restful, flowing free;
When the friends that death has parted
shall in bliss again unite,
What a gathering and a greeting
there will be.

—FANNY CROSBY.

Thursday

DAILY READING—John 21:12-25.
DAILY TEXT—*"Lovest thou me?"* (verses 15, 16, 17).

A man was sitting by a fireplace looking into the glowing red coals on the grate. As he sat there gazing into the fire, the sun that had shifted sent a sunbeam hurtling through an adjacent window, and as it fell on the red coals they suddenly became black and lifeless-looking. The fire in the grate had not changed an iota, but in the presence of the brighter and more intense light the whole appearance had changed. The overwhelming brightness blotted out the fire in the grate. So it is in experience; as the love of Christ fills the heart, all other loves seem by comparison to be hatred. In the light of a great and supernatural love, natural affection is in eclipse. Not that we love those nearest us less, but we love Christ more.—SELECTED.

Friday

DAILY READING—2 Samuel 17:1-14, 23.
DAILY TEXT—*"Ahithophel . . . hanged himself"* (verse 23).

The suicide of Ahithophel was the tragic ending of a man who had already committed moral suicide. He had sold himself to the enemy's camp because it looked feasible to his ambitious and proud heart. The moral issue apparently had little bearing upon his decision and actions. Popularity and prestige meant everything to this first-rate "turncoat"! It was easy for him to turn from David, God's man, to Absalom, Satan's agent, because he regarded not the good of the kingdom but that of his own selfish self. How different from Daniel's decision and resultant conduct at a later date when he served in a heathen king's court. Had Daniel regarded his own popularity and success above the favor of God he would have taken a different course on several occasions. But he recognized true values and gauged his life accordingly. Ahithophel knew full well how to coöperate for his own benefit! Anyone can be an "Ahithophel"; it takes courage to be a "Daniel."—PAMEII.

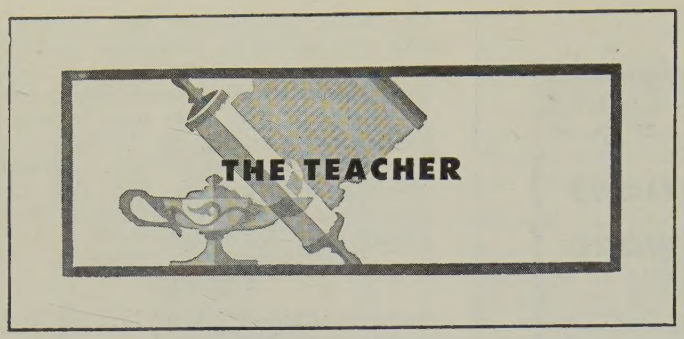
Saturday

DAILY READING—Romans 12:9-20.
DAILY TEXT—*"Fervent in spirit; serving the Lord"* (verse 11).

The amount of loafing practiced by the average Christian in spiritual things would ruin a concert pianist if he allowed himself to do the same thing in the field of music. No scientist could solve his exacting problems if he took as little interest in it as the rank and file of Christians take in the need of being soldiers and conquerors. The nation with soldiers as soft and undisciplined as the soldiers of the churches would be conquered by the first enemy that attacked it. Triumphs are not won by men in easy chairs. Success is costly! If we would progress spiritually we must separate ourselves unto the things of God and concentrate upon them to the exclusion of a thousand things the wordly man considers important. We must cultivate God in the solitudes and the silence; we must make the kingdom of God the sphere of our activity and labor in it like a miner in the earth.—EXCHANGE.

The Subscription Campaign

The 1956 Subscription Campaign begins on October 21 and runs through December 2. Plan now for a successful Campaign.



By DON J. KENYON

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON—OCTOBER 7, 1956

The Creation Story

Genesis 1:1-5ab, 9-12, 26-28, 31ab

GOLDEN TEXT

"And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."—GENESIS 1:31.

BACKGROUND AND LESSON ORIENTATION

The reader of the Bible is obliged to regard it as truth. The Bible begins with God without accounting for His existence or offering proof for it. Had the creation account been the product of man's mind, volumes would have been written to account for the world as it is. Men have for millenniums been satisfied to accept this majestic account of the creation of the material universe. To the man of God creation is the activity of a personal God, not a "process of nature." The Christian has no fear or distrust of the research of honest men into the secrets of the natural world. We need only fear the hypotheses and speculations about what is observed. That which is factual has only substantiated the Word. Genesis is not a scientific treatise; it is an inspired account of the earth's and man's beginning.

CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

The context of creation is God and eternity. The assertion that the "plan" of creation is patterned after the Jewish Sabbath is a good example of man's deductive reasoning. The Sabbath of Genesis is not the Sabbath of Israel. Israel's Sabbath is grounded in God's Sabbath. A comparison with pagan creation myths will cause the Christian to appreciate the quiet dignity and majesty of the Biblical account. It is never the privilege of a Bible teacher to bring the inference of quasi-scientific views to the Bible to prove the Biblical view. The Bible calls for no support. It calls for faith. There are precious few men who are remotely able to discuss science and the Scriptures. Many have dramatically displayed their ignorance by attempting it. Dangers arise from not beginning with God or beginning before He begins.

SIMPLIFIED OUTLINE

1. *God, the Father of Lights*—Genesis 1:1-5.
2. *God, the Author of the Earth*—Genesis 1:9-12.
3. *God, the Maker of Man*—Genesis 1:26-28, 31.

KEY WORD ANALYSIS

(1) "In the beginning" (1:1). Just as the *en arche* of John 1:1, this expression is used absolutely. It is impossible to render it as a subordinate idea either grammatically or logically.

(2) "Spirit of God"—*Elohim Ruach* (1:2). The account here gives us a picture of the creative activity of the Holy Spirit who works upon the formless and lifeless, giving both form and life. This is creation, not merely stimulation.

(3) "And God said" (1:3). Creation began with a fiat. Thus the word has priority over the work. (See Heb. 11:3; 2 Pet. 3:5, 7.)

COMMENTARY ON THE PRINTED TEXT

1. *God, the Father of Lights* (Gen. 1:1-5).

Genesis 1:1 gives us a simple and authoritative answer to the major question of the material universe. The Bible denies the eternity of matter. The material universe did not evolve from previously existing material. If a man does not begin with a personal God, he must begin with nothing, which is not a beginning at all. There is nothing that is made that was not made by God.

The Christian must remember that it is not obligatory for the orthodox to take a stand upon any of the theories on the relation of Genesis 1:1 to 1:2. There are those who hold a cataclysmic view of the chaos. Others hold that this is nothing more than a description of the method which God used in bringing primeval chaos into orderliness. However, theistic evolution denies the Genesis account. Neither does orthodoxy demand any one point of view as to the time element involved in the creation account. A man may indict himself more quickly by his stand upon that which Genesis does *not* teach than upon its stated facts. In this chapter we see the eternal *Logos* as God's Creator; we also see the eternal Spirit. The Trinity moves to effect that which they have willed.

2. *God, the Author of the Earth* (Gen. 1:9-12).

The work of the third day of creation is twofold. God gathers the waters into the seas and causes the dry ground to appear. The process is not discussed. God's word is sufficient to bring it to pass. God stamps all of His creative acts with His own approval. The earth is then clothed with vegetation. The trees were thus created before the seed that reproduces them. Fruit-bearing trees seem to appear in full development. Thus God did not merely invest the earth with "seed potential"; His creation was complete and mature. All of the statements of Genesis require faith in a creative God. A Christian mind can find rest amidst shifting theories only in the creation account.

3. *God, the Maker of Man* (Gen. 1:26-28, 31).

A man's acceptance of the Genesis record means the necessity of rejection of a great deal of biological hypothesis. Genesis states clearly that man is the crowning act of God's creative activity. Man is made in the image and likeness of God. Man possesses the component elements of personality which are comparable to the person of God. This view is at utter variance with the "ascent of man." God created man to rule, not to be enslaved. He created man to have fellowship and communion with Himself and made man capable of doing so immediately. God created our first parents with the full intention that they "be fruitful, and multiply." Man came from God but men come from men.

The burden of proof brought against these facts lies with men who are willing to face the responsibility of their folly. It may take intellectual crucifixion to have faith in the Genesis account, but it takes intellectual suicide to deny it.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR LESSON PREPARATION

(1) Deal with the positive and authoritative and do so in the spirit of declaration. Getting into the hypothetical and the speculative brings the teacher before his class as an apologist. Christians have lost respect by using doubtful "scientific proofs." (2) Study this great chapter as a unit and teach the principles that are here. There is not time to analyze it in one brief lesson period.

Local Conventions

★ ★ ★ ★

September 30–October 7

Hearing missionaries speak, talking with them about their work and having them as guests in your home will give you a close-up view of preaching the gospel in other lands. For the address of a church near you having a convention write the Home Department, The Christian and Missionary Alliance, 260 West 44th St., New York 36, N. Y.

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..... September 30–October 3
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..... September 30–October 3
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..... September 30–October 3
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Chile	1,200	23.08
Colombia	1,572	30.24
Congo	1,356	26.08
Ecuador	1,164	22.39
French West Africa	1,224	23.54
Gabon	1,320	25.37
Hong Kong	1,596	30.69
India	1,104	21.24
Indonesia	1,368	26.31
Israel	1,560	30.00
Japan	1,476	28.39
Jordan	1,716	33.00
Laos	2,220	42.70
New Guinea	1,680	32.31
Peru	1,260	24.23
Philippine Islands	1,740	33.46
Syria	1,716	33.00
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